R E P O R T R E S U M E S

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A RECOMMENDED SELECTION OF FILMS SUITABLE FOR NDEA INSTITUTES.

BY- HAZARD, PATRICK

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THIS LISTING OF FILMS AND RELATED MATERIALS TOUCHES A WIDE RANGE OF LITERARY AND CULTURAL THEMES. PARTICULARLY RECOMMENDED TO PROVIDE AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF THE INTERACTIONS BETWEEN MEDIA AND LITERATURE ARE SOURCEBOOKS, CONTEMPORARY CRITICAL REACTIONS, THE LONG-PLAYING RECORD, AND TELEVISION PLAY FOR "BENITO CERENO." EASILY ACCESSIBLE FILM MATERIALS LISTED INCLUDE FILMS ON PAINTING, POETRY, FICTION, DRAMA, AND NONFICTION, TREATING SUBJECTS FROM FAULKNER'S MISSISSIPPI TO AN EXPRESSIONIST PARABLE ABOUT COMPLACENCY IN THE ATOMIC AGE. ALSO RECOMMENDED ARE FILMS OF PLAYS BY CHEKHOV, EURIPIDES, SHAW, SHERIDAN, AND STRINDBERG, PERFORMED BY THE ESSO REPORTORY THEATRE, AND OVER 30 NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION PROGRAMS. THE NAMES, LENGTH, COST, AND ORDERING INFORMATION ARE INCLUDED FOR MOST OF THE FILMS AND OTHER MATERIALS, TOGETHER WITH OCCASIONAL CRITICAL COMMENT. (JB)

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A RECOMMENDED SELECTION OF FILMS SUITABLE FOR NDEA INSTITUTES

by Patrick Hazard
Chairman, English Department
Beaver College
Glenside, PA.

I. Specially recommended: "Benito Cereno" by Robert Lowell, NET A-V, 1 hour and 40 minutes, write Mr. James Cole, NET A-V, Bloomington, Indiana, call 812 337-2002.

Columbia Records sells an LP of the American Place Theatre production of "Benito Cereno." There are two excellent casebooks available for the study of Benito Cereno, Seymour Gross's for Wadsworth Publishing Company (Belmont, California) and Joseph P. Runden's for D. C. Heath (Boston, Massachusetts). These gathered materials plus the thirty-odd sources cited on the tale and its provenance in Jarvis Thurston, et. al., Short Story Criticism, pp. 155-156, provide the media-shy instructor with a way of digging deeply, at one and the same time, into a neglected classic of great timeliness and a major contemporary poet's creative dialogue with his intellectual ancestor. Sourcebook, novel, LP, TV play, contemporary critical reaction provide the easily accessible materials for an in-depth study of the interactions between media and literature.

II. The following represent the best newer media materials touching a wide range of genres and literary themes.

While we prefer studying intensively one work like the Lowell-Melville transaction in Benito Cereno, we believe nighttime screenings of a less rigorous nature would provide institute participants with epiphanies of their own about how to use newer media as literary vehicles in their own right. Because films on painting perhaps need a separate rationale, we provide a brief defense of their inclusion.

> Literature more frequently than not is taught in a cultural vacuum in the high schools. There is Bryant without Cole; Emerson but no Greenough; Howells but no Homer; Dreiser without the Ash-Cans; Hemingway but no Hopper. Salinger is read, but Levine, equally disturbed by the repressively phony, is rarely seen.
>
> This defect in our search for cultivation in the schools is in part due to teacher ignorance, in part to the relative inaccessibility of non-print arts. Good films like Yankee Painter and Jack Levine (both Contemporary Films), interesting non-fiction works in their own right, are ideal aesthetic structures for eliciting mature acts of written criticism. More than that, however, such films relieve teacher and student alike -- at one and the same time -- of corrigible ignorance about the total cultural milieu which alone makes possible the fullest comprehension of a literary work.

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POETRY

"In a Dark Time," 40 minutes, Contemporary Films, 267 West 25th Street, New York 10001, $15.00 rental. Theodore Roethke reads his verse.

"A Child's Christmas in Wales," 26 minutes, Contemporary, $10.00 rental. Sensitive animation of still photography.

Albert Waller at WCBS-TV (245 W. 55th Street, New York, New York 10019) has matched last year's achievement ("In the American Grain: William Carlos Williams") with a splendid mosaic on New York as seen by its writers from Whitman to Updike, "Sense of the City". For free loan of both half hour films, write George Dessart at WCBS-TV, 9th floor.

The NCTE sponsored a Festival of Films on Poetry in Houston. Television Information Office prepared a free brochure commenting on the films. T10, 745 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

FICTION

"Faulkner's Mississippi," 50 minutes, Benchmark Films, 516 Fifth Avenue, New York 10035, 212 MU 2-4777. Brilliant evocation of the small town and hunting milieux of Yoknapatawpha.

"Dickens's England," 25 minutes, Encyclopedia Britannica Films, Wilmette, Illinois. Excellent period graphics evoke the Victorian ambience of Dickens's fiction.

"Sense of the City," 28 minutes, WCBS-TV, limited free loan. A literary mosaic of great power about New York City.

DRAMA

"Who Do You Kill?", 50 minutes, Carousel Films, 1501 Broadway, New York 10019, 212 LA 4-4126. East Side/West Side TV film on rat-bite infanticide in Harlem.

"No Hiding Place," 50 minutes, Carousel Films. Integration in a polite Long Island suburb.

"In White America," Columbia LP of off-Broadway play about the history of slavery, by Princeton historian Martin Duberman. Signet paperback.

NON-FICTION

"My Childhood," 50 minutes, Benchmark Films. Parallel autobiographies of James Baldwin and Hubert Humphrey.

"Images of Leonard Baskin," 28 minutes, Contemporary Films. Rental $22.50. Eloquent self-appraisal of the aesthetic of a leading American printmaker.

"Marked for Failure," 55 minutes, NET audiovisual service, Bloomington, Indiana. Rental $9.15. Excellent study of compensatory education strategies in center-city schools.

Two of America's most talented young film directors, Michael Roemer and Robert Young, have produced Nothing But a Man, the first film to handle the racial crisis as a human rather than a sociological problem. It is now available on 16mm rental. These ex-English majors will inspire our students to use the newer media eloquently and responsibly. Write George Dessart at WCBS-TV, 9th floor.

The Dartmouth Conference on Film Study in the college premiered a sampler of prize-winning student films circulated by the National Student Associations, Washington. For rates and other valuable suggestions, apply to David Stewart, National Foundation on the Arts, 1800 G Street NW, Washington, D.C.

Viewers at the Anglo-American Seminar on the Teaching and Learning of English at Dartmouth were particularly impressed by three films distributed by Contemporary Films (267 W. 25th Street, New York City 10001):

"Clay," a short experimental animated film on the short and not exceedingly happy life of homo sapiens - 10 minutes.

"Very Nice, Very Nice," an expressionist parable about complacency in the atomic age - 6 minutes.

"John Hirsch," a half-hour analysis of one man's successful campaign to bring community theatre to Winnipeg, Canada.

III. Contact Mr. Ed Lamb, TV Office, room 1626, Standard Oil of New Jersey, Rockefeller Center, New York, 212 974-3000, for free use in your NDEA Summer Institutes along the Eastern seaboard from Maine to Puerto Rico.

1. Esso Repertory Theatre -- single prints available.

2. World Theatre -- three prints available.

3. Festival of Performing Arts -- three prints available.

Esso Repertory Theatre

1. "Irish Triple Bill: (CALVARY, Yeats; HOW HE LIED TO HER HUSBAND, Shaw; ACT WITHOUT WORDS II, Beckett), Playhouse in the Park, Cincinnati.

2. "Bedtime Story," Sean O'Casey, Seattle Repertory Theatre.

3. "The Dumb Waiter," Harold Pinter, Hull House Theatre, Chicago.

4. "St. Patrick's Day," Richard Brinsley Sheridan, The Charles Playhouse, Boston.

5. "The Creditors," August Strindberg, Barter Theatre, Abingdon, Virginia.

6. "Don Juan in Hell," George Bernard Shaw, APA at the Phoenix, New York City.

7. "A Wedding," Anton Chekov, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre.

8. "Chee-Chee" and "The Man with the Flower in his Mouth," Luigi Pirandello, The Theatre Group, University of California Extension, Los Angeles.

9. "Trojan Women," Euripides, Alley Theatre, Houston, Texas.

The appearance in TV as Art: Some Essays in Criticism (NCTE, $1.25) of Richard Stonesifer's comparative explication of the America and Nigeria items in Esso World Theatre make these two films particularly germane to connected TV study with literary criticism.

National Educational Television did English a great service this past year by running its U.S.A. Literature series. For a complete catalog, write Dr. James A. Cole, NET Films Audio Visual Center, U. of Indiana, Bloomington.

THEATER
Broadway: The Shrinking Giant
What Ever Happened to Off Broadway
Regional Theater--The Light of New Hope
The Professors and the Professionals
Folkways, Festivals and Free Theater
The Actor, The Playwright, and the Future

NOVEL
1914-1942 The Loss of Innocence
Vladimir Nabokov
Saul Bellow: The World of the Dangling Man
Truman Capote: The Non-Fiction Novel
Ralph Ellison on Works in Progress

POETRY
William Carlos Williams
Allen Ginsberg and Lawrence Ferlinghetti
Robert Duncan and John Weiners
Gary Snyder and Phillip Whelan
Michael McClure and Brother Antoninus
Theodore Roethke

OPPOSITION THEATER
The Satirist
The Anti-Musical
The Mock Myth
The Unpleasant Play
The Living Theater
The Family Commotion

WRITERS
Catcher in the Rye Revisited Part 1
Catcher in the Rye Revisited Part 2
John Updike
The Iowa Workshop
Bruce J. Friedman and Black Humor
Science Fiction
(three more to follow)

This has been a promising year, then, in several ways, and one would hope the NDEA Institutes could accelerate these mature trends by training teachers who can create the great audiences Whitman felt were needed for great art.